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nourishment of their spiritual sense. They are learning to see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, and are catching the accent of our voices as we direct them to the great open secret of God's temple with its signs and symbols of His presence.

The relation between the mother's mind and that of her young children is analogous to that which exists between her body and that of the unweaned babe. In both cases the child depends for its nourishment and support directly and immediately on its mother.

By what I have said I am by no means intimating that parents should question or pry into their children's hearts—a practice which I believe to have led to many evils—untruth being one of the chief. No, it is in *imparting* religious truth that I would urge the sort of natural unreserve which can be wisely cultivated if we set it before us as an aim.

Of course there is another special method of bringing into activity our children's sense of the symbolism of the universe. Poetry which acts so powerfully in this direction on the adult mind, does so even more on that of the young. Wordsworth, first studied by the parent, will be found most helpful in parts. Those passages in his writings which strongly bring before us his own grasp of the underlying spiritual, may be beyond a child's comprehension, but if imbibed by the mother they can be by her transmuted into food for the little one's mind. Even Dante, with his eagle soarings, can be brought down in this way to the level of its thought. I found recently that my youngest child caught at once, and with delight, at the vision of the heavenly rose with its petals of white-robed saints, and bee-flights of golden-winged angels mounting upwards in adoration and again descending on ministries of love. She recurred to the image with evident pleasure when she next saw a garden-rose, and it evidently kindled a fresh appetite within her for the beauty of goodness. Surely, just what our highest poetry is intended to do.

I think it will not be difficult to apply the principle of the symbolism of life and of the universe in teaching our children, if its truth be first vividly realised by parents themselves, and I hope I may not have appeared vague and visionary in the statement of my own idea of how that principle should be applied.

"SAINT GEORGE OF MERRIE ENGLONE."

I.

It was the time when the Queen of Fairies kept her annual feast for twelve days. On the first day in the beginning of the feast, a tall clownish young man presented himself, who, falling before the Queen, desired a boon, as the custom then was; and during that feast she might not refuse to grant any favour that should be asked of her. The boon was, that he might have the achievement of any adventure which should befall during the feast: that being granted, he rested himself on the floor, unfit, because he was a country fellow, for a better place.

Soon after entered a fair lady in mourning weeds, riding on a white ass, with a dwarf behind her, leading a warlike steed that bore the arms of a knight, the spear being carried in the dwarf's hand. She, falling before the Queen of Fairies, complained that her father and mother, an ancient king and queen, had been by a huge dragon for many years shut up in a brazen castle; and therefore she besought the Fairy Queen to assign her some one of her knights who should go to deliver them.

Presently that clownish person, upstarting, desired that adventure; whereat the Queen much wondering, and the lady much gainsaying, he the more earnestly entreated their permission to go. In the end the lady told him that unless the armour which she brought would serve him (that is, the armour of a Christian man specified by St. Paul) he could not succeed in that enterprise; which being forthwith put upon him, he seemed the goodliest man of all that company, and was well liked of the lady. And soon, taking on him knight-hood and mounting on that strange courser, he went forth

with her on that adventure. Now behold them riding forth together:—

"A gentle knight was pricking on the plain,
Yclad in knightly arms and silver shield,
Wherein old dints of deep wounds did remain,
The cruel marks of many a bloody field;
Yet arms till that time did he never wield.
His angry steed did chide his foaming bit,
As much disdain to the curb to yield.
Full jolly knight he seemed, and fair did sit,
As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fit.

"And on his breast a bloody cross he bore,
The dear remembrance of his dying lord,
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead as living, ever him adored.
Upon his shield the like was also scored
For sovereign hope, which in his help he had:
Right faithful true he was in deed and word,
But of his cheer did seem too solemn sad;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

"A lovely lady rode him fair beside,
Upon a lowly ass more white than snow;
Yet she much whiter, but the same did hide
Under a veil, that wimpled was full low,
And over all, a black stole she did throw,
As one that inly mourned: so was she sad,
And heavy sat upon her palfrey slow.
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
And by her, in a line, a milk-white lamb she led.

"So pure and innocent as that same lamb,
She was in life and every virtuous love,
And by descent from royal lineage came
Of ancient kings and queens, that had of yore
Their sceptres stretched from east to western shore,
And all the world in their subjection held;
Till that infernal fiend with foul uproar
Forwasted all their land, and them expel'd.
Whom to avenge, she had this knight from far compel'd."

Together the pair rode on in pleasing talk, followed by the lady's dwarf, who carried her bag. But presently a storm of rain came on, and they must needs look round for shelter. Not far away they spied a wood whose thick branches shut out the daylight, and underneath the green shade were broad paths worn with footsteps and leading far in. So they entered in and rode through path after path, joying to hear

the birds, and noting the height and beauty of the trees; until at last, the storm being over, they wished to return to the highway. And now they wandered about hither and thither, trying first this path and then that, but all the paths were alike, and they could find no way out of the wood. So they tried the most beaten road, and at length it brought them to a hollow cave amid the thickest woods.

Here the bold champion dismounted, handing his spear to the dwarf, and in spite of the gentle warning of the lady, he went to the dark hole and looked in. This was no other than Error's den, and there he saw by the glittering of his own armour the ugly monster plain, half like a serpent, half like a woman, most loathsome and foul. She started up, hurling her horrid tail about her head, and looked about, and seeing one in shining armour, would have turned again, for she hated light. But the valiant knight leapt upon her with his blade, and kept her from turning back. Enraged, she began to bray most horribly, and turning fierce, advanced threatening her angry sting; but he lifted his mighty hand and heaved a blow that stunned her for an instant. Then, all at once, she raised her body high above the ground, and leapt upon his shield, and wound her huge train all suddenly about his body,

"That hand or foot to stir he strove in vain;
God help the man so wrapt in Error's endless train."

His lady, sad to see his case, cried out to cheer him, "Now, now, Sir Knight, shew what ye be; have faith as well as courage; strangle her, else she sure will strangle thee." So he got one hand free and caught her throat with such a grip, that she was compelled to loose her hold of him.

And then the monster out of her filthy maw poured forth a flood of poison, horrible and black, full of books and papers, of loathsome frogs and toads without eyes, and other vile matters, and so horrible was the smell that the knight grew faint and sick; but he plucked up heart once more, and, with one great stroke, he parted her hateful head from her body, full of filthy sin.

His lady, who had watched the combat from afar, came joyously to greet his victory, and said, "Fair knight, you have worn that armour worthily, and have won great glory

this day over a mighty enemy. May many more adventures end as well as this, your first."

II.

Then the knight mounted his steed again, and he and the lady followed the plainest path, which at last led them out of the wood: forward he went in search of new adventures, but had travelled far before he heard of any.

At length they chanced to meet upon the way an aged man, with gray beard, bare feet, and clothed in a long black gown, praying with downcast eyes as he walked. Saluting him with reverence, the knight asked if he knew of any strange adventures to be had in that neighbourhood, whereto he replied that a silly old man who spent his days in saying his prayers did not meddle with such matters, but that he had heard of a strange man who wasted all the country far and near, and who lived a long way off in a wasteful wilderness. Then said the lady to her knight that he must be worn out with the battle he had just fought, and had better rest for the night to gather strength for fresh adventures. Whereupon the old man bade them welcome to his lowly hermitage.

The evening passed quickly, for the old man had store of pleasing words, and knew how to file his tongue as smooth as glass. With nightfall the knight and his lady grew sleepy, and their host led them to their closets. But no sooner were his guests fast asleep, than the old man sought amongst his magic books for charms to trouble sleepy minds. Then, out of the deep darkness he called forth legions of spirits, which came fluttering round his wicked head. One of these he sent to Morpheus, the heavy god of sleep, to beg of him an evil dream wherewith to trouble the knight. Of the other spirit he made a lady, so like the yet sleeping Una, that this ancient wizard himself could hardly have told the one from the other.

Now, when the morning was come the weary lady woke and went out of her bower to look for her knight and her dwarf, but, alas, they had both ridden forth long since, persuaded by the false spirit, who seemed to be Una, and were now far on their way. Sorely the poor lady wept to find herself deserted, and then she mounted her ass and rode off, quick as her slow beast would carry her, over hill and

dale, through wood and brake, ever in search of her faithless knight. The knight, meanwhile, rode fast on his fiery steed, with Will for his guide, caring not whither he went nor what happened to him. At last he chanced to meet upon the way an infidel Saracen, large of limb and strong of joint, who cared not for God nor man, and who bore his name, *Sans Foy*, writ upon his shield in gay letters. With him was a beauteous lady, decked with many jewels and wearing a scarlet robe embroidered in pearls and gold.

And now the Redcross Knight and Sans Foy meet in conflict; fiery sparks fly from their swift-crossing swords, and the green field is dyed with streams of purple blood. "Curse on that cross," cried the Saracen, "thou wouldst have been long since dead had not that charm preserved thee," and then, with desperate stroke, he smote his adversary's crest; but he at that same moment aimed so fierce a blow at the Saracen that his helmet was shivered, and the blow cleft his head. So fell Sans Foy before this faithful knight.

Then the lady who was with the bold Saracen, turned to the Red Cross Knight, and in soft accents besought him to take pity on her unprotected state. He listens to her tale, the while gazing upon her beauty, and assures her she need have no fear; from henceforth he would be her friend, and they should journey on together. So Saint George goes forth with the fair and false Fidessa, gay and content as when Una journey'd by his side.

III.

Meantime, the gentle Una followed as she could her faithless Knight; she searched hither and thither, weeping as she went through wood and waste, and at last, worn out with long labour, lay down to rest in a shady glade. And as she lay it chanced that a ramping lion rushed suddenly out of the thickest wood, and ran at her with gaping mouth, eager to devour. But instead, when he had looked on her, he kissed her weary feet, and licked her lily hands with fawning tongue, so had her truth and beauty calmed his rage: which, when she saw, she wept the more to think that the lion, lord of all the beasts, should be tender to her weakness while her own dear lord did hate her and forsake her.

As she wept, the kingly beast stood gazing on her, and when again she mounted her white ass and took up once more her weary search, the lion would not leave her desolate, but went along with her as a strong guard of her chaste person, and a faithful mate in her sad troubles. When she slept he kept watch, and when she waked he followed her bidding, led by the gentle look of her fair eyes. Thus attended, through deserts wide she wandered, and met no living soul; and once, following the track of footsteps, she was lead into a cave where she took shelter for the night, not knowing it was a robbers' den; and in the night, her faithful guardian fell upon and slew the robbers who would have taken her life. Other perils did they meet, and the faithful beast was wounded in sad Una's service; but he limped painfully after his mistress, as she wearily followed her wandering lord.

(To be continued.)

AUNT MAI'S BUDGET.

BY MRS. F. STEINTHAL.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—Thank you all for your letters, which I only wish I could answer individually; but as over fifty came last week you will all agree, that unless I were a fairy aunt and had six right hands, I should find it difficult to do so. You will, probably, most of you be at the seaside or in the country still, so I am not going to trouble you to answer my letter this month; but will give you a holiday. I want to tell you, however, of a very ingenious contrivance I have seen to help children to learn the families of flowers.

A clever lady enamelled a long umbrella box, and made one row of little holes, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch across, in the lid. In each hole stands a little homœopathic medicine bottle, and before each bottle is gummed a label, with the name of a family written on each. When the children come home with the flowers they have gathered, they place one of each kind in its own place, and so learn the families with very little trouble. The girls might paint the box (which must be shallow to let the necks of the bottles stand out) after the boys have made the round holes, and both might write the labels, and if you get it ready in the wet days in the holidays you will have a great surprise for your governesses when they return to you.

Wishing you all very happy holidays,

Your loving

AUNTIE MAI.

COMPETITION.

The lists of flowers sent in show great patience and knowledge on the part of the children. Lists were sent from France, Norway and Switzerland, and it was most interesting to compare the flora of the different countries, seen on the same day. May Dowding heads the list with 110 flowers, and she has also done the best painting, so she gets "Tales